

THE FISH

I think I have never felt my heart,
so warm and red:

In the worst minutes of this fatal night
I feel thousands of luminous waterfalls
born from a deep knowing,
that boils within me;

I feel that in every corner of this despairing salt desert
thousands of cheerful forests,
suddenly
grow out of the earth.

□

Ah! My lost knowing, like a fleeing fish in unraveled ponds!
Now, I have become a clear lake, created by the magic of love;
please find a way to me through the ponds of mirror!

□

I think, I have never experienced my hands, so large and joyful:
I feel that with the flooding red tears from my eyes,
a continuous song will arise, like a sun that never sets;

I feel, now,
in each of my vessels,
there is a pulse of my heart
like the waking bell of a departing caravan.

□

One night, she came to me through the door,
pure like the soul of water
two fish on her chest and a mirror in her hand
her damp, long hair weaved like moss, with a scent of lake.

Standing at the edge of despair, I shouted:
“—Ah, the eternal knowing, I won't let you go!”

Ahmad Shamlou, 1959

Ahmad Shamlou (1925–2000) is one of the most outstanding Iranian poets in the field of contemporary Persian poetry. Before him, it was Nima Yooshij (1895–1960) who transformed classical Iranian poetry into a modern style called “new poetry”/ “she'r-e no”. Influenced by Nima, Ahmad Shamlou went further and created the distinguished style of “white poetry”/ “she'r-e sepid”, which he introduced to the world. Each of his poems has a unique form and structure that contrasts with all previous traditional styles that rely on their rigid structures.

Inspired by Shamlou, I try to loosen the rigid structure of classical Iranian music and give it some freedom. In this album, I simply observe and follow the form that each lyric suggests; and then interpret it through musical expressions that bring out the hidden form of the poem. Along the way, I use my interpretation of the knowledge and techniques I have taken from Western classical music and jazz.

Here you can read two of his poems, to which I have composed music in this album. I should mention that I have only made a literal translation of these poems. A real poetic translation requires a different specialisation that goes far beyond my knowledge. For more information about his books, and also these poems, you can visit this website: shamlou.org

Mirsaeed Hosseiny Panah, October 2022



Confrontation between large nations and different ideologies characterizes the news picture today. But under the headlines, a rapprochement between people across national borders and cultural differences is happening. We don't have to go further than a street in central Oslo to note that fusions between foreign food traditions and Norwegian taste have been a great enrichment for our everyday life.

With his background in Iranian traditional music, jazz and Western modernism, Mirsaeed Hosseiny Panah is a composer who searches for syntheses between Eastern and Western cultural expressions. He has chosen texts by the great poet Ahmad Shamlou. Shamlou himself represents such a synthesis in that he mixes Iranian tradition with Western-inspired modernism. Hosseiny Panah's music eloquently captures the complexity and often dark uncertainty that characterizes this secular poet's work. He weaves instrumental textural patterns with tonal material from traditional scales around the beautiful, almost expressionistic song lines. Hosseiny Panah's eminent santur playing slips in and out of the orchestral textures and creates a distinctive atmosphere.

Mirsaeed Hosseiny Panah shows with this release that he is a composer who has dared to move on from his cultural background without abandoning it, doing so with the clear intention of establishing a new and more comprehensive musical identity. Important breakthroughs in music have often occurred in border lands. In such a land, Mirsaeed is a strong voice and it will be exciting to follow his further exploits in this terrain.



Lasse Thoresen, October 2022
composer & professor

POETIC ENSEMBLE

ROMANTICALLY

The one who says I love you
is a sad singer
who has lost his voice.

I wish love had a tongue to talk

Thousands of happy larks in your eyes
thousands of silent canaries in my throat.

What if love had a tongue to talk

□

The one who says I love you is the saddest heart of the night
who is seeking for its moonlight.

I wish love had a tongue to talk

Thousands of smiling suns in the sweep of your walk
thousands of crying stars in my longing.

What if love had a tongue to talk

Ahmad Shamlou, 1979



AMALIE KONGSSUND

vocal (soprano)

MARIKA SCHULTZE

vocal (mezzo soprano)

NJÅL SPARBO

vocal (bass)

DIMITRIS SPOURAS

conductor

TORA RØSTVIK

flute

GRACIA ORTEGA NAVARRO

clarinet

ESPEN NYSTOG AAS

bass clarinet

JONATHAN SANDQVIST

bassoon

MARI BIRGITTE BØLGEN HALVORSEN

violin I

KAJA PERNILLE ØSTERVOLD

violin II

CHRISTOPHER ROSSEBØ

viola

MAREK BIENKUNSKI

cello

MIRSAEED HOSSEINY PANAH

chromatic santur, composer

1 THE FISH 10:08

2 ROMANTICALLY
– The One Who Says I Love You... 7:39

3 ROMANTICALLY
– The World Is Like A Temporary Residence... 10:07

4 SONG OF WANDERERS 4:44

5 I WISH I WERE WATER 9:46

6 FUNERAL SPEECH 8:58

7 BRIGHT HORIZON 11:56 Total time 1:03:24

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by Martin Abrahamsen

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at Rainbow Studio

Produced by Mirsaeed Hosseiny Panah

Executive producer Odd Gjelsnes

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Mirsaeed Hosseiny Panah photo by Malene Økland

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MIRSAEED HOSSEINY PANAH

I Wish I Were Water